

William T. Mann

9601 Platte Purchase
Kansas City, MO 64155

February 6, 2023

ATTN: Marilyn Sanders, City Clerk
Office of the City Clerk
414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Dear Ms. Sanders:

I am a landowner in Kansas City, Missouri. A substantial portion of the land I own is used for farming purposes. I am writing in response to Ordinance No. 220961 (the “Ordinance”). The Ordinance aims to preserve trees by restricting their removal. Because the Ordinance is still in the revision process, I am proposing that the City make a small but important change that will exempt farming and ranching activities from the scope of the Ordinance. The basis for this proposed change and the text of the proposed change are both detailed below.

In 2014, the Missouri Constitution was amended to give farmers and ranchers a guaranteed right to farm and ranch. Section 35 of Article I of the Missouri Constitution reads:

That agriculture which provides food, energy, health benefits, and security is the foundation and stabilizing force of Missouri’s economy. To protect this vital sector of Missouri’s economy, the right of farmers and ranchers to engage in farming and ranching practices shall be forever guaranteed in this state, subject to duly authorized powers, if any, conferred by Article VI of the Constitution of Missouri.

The Ordinance, as written, is contrary to this right because it unduly restricts farming and ranching practices. It is sometimes necessary to remove trees on already-existing farmland so that best use can be made of the land. Similarly, it is sometimes necessary to remove trees on land to convert it into land used for farming and ranching. The removal of trees in these contexts is merely to bolster agriculture, described in the Missouri Constitution as “the foundation and stabilizing force of Missouri’s economy.”

To ensure that farmers and ranchers are not restricted by the Ordinance, I am proposing that the Ordinance be revised to include the following exemption:

88-424-03-M. Tree removal for the purpose of engaging in farming or ranching practices.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully,


William T. Mann

cc: Teresa Loar, Councilwoman 2nd District-at-Large
Dan Fowler, Councilman 2nd District
Kevin O'Neill, Councilwoman 1st District-at-Large
Heather Hall, Councilwoman 1st District
Mayor Quinton Lucas
Brandon Ellington, Councilman 3rd District-at-Large
Melissa Robinson, Councilwoman 3rd District
Katheryn Shields, Councilwoman 4th District-at-Large
Eric Bunch, Councilman 4th District
Lee Barnes, Jr., Councilman 5th District-at-Large
Ryana Parks-Shaw, Councilwoman 5th District
Andrea Bough, Councilwoman 6th District-at-Large
Kevin McManus, Mayor Pro Tem, Councilman 6th District